

that's a comparison to a teacher, you give teachers apples, and what they use, this is their case right here. This is why they feel that we should put in that \$20 million and so I read it pretty closely. And I'd like you to kind of look at some of the things that they talk about in here because this is what their pitch is for this \$20 million and one in particular is that they state that Nebraska has a long-standing tradition of exceptional education and who can argue with that. They go on to state that the quality of education today is even better than it was ten years ago. And they provide statistics for us to look to, to substantiate that claim. We look to the salaries, the income ranking, expenditures, that kind of stuff. Doesn't make any point as far as the educational quality, but then they move on and they make comparisons and the three areas they looked to are, first, the ACT scores, the comparison; the graduation rates and the drop out rates. Now I focused in on the ACT score because I thought that, you know, that was their first one here. That's what they hit on right up front, so I figure that that must be the one that they really feel is significant. This is what they're using to substantiate the \$20 million that we should appropriate this next year. And as I stated earlier, ACT scores have dropped and they've dropped dramatically in the last ten years. So I'm probing again. I'm saying, gosh, there's got to be something in here to justify this \$20 million. About the only really thing that I can see justifying this money is that experimental amendment that Senator Withem added on that said, let's take a different look at how we're educating our students because we're going to pay teachers that do an exceptional job additional money and we put in hopefully \$5 million. I'm willing to take a gamble on that. It's not 15, it's not the whole ball of wax, but at least it's hopefully a fourth of it, if \$20 million is appropriated for this bill. I'm willing to take that chance and that's why I'm going to vote to advance it today from General File, but I don't know if I'm going to be able to do that today, advance it to General File, if we're not going to have an opportunity two years from now to reexamine it one more time. Another thing that I think we should talk about too is that I think we're on two different levels. When I talk about this particular bill I make arguments dealing with education. I compare us to Japan, Germany, figures that I distributed were from the National Commission for Excellence in Education. You may remember that commission because back in 1983 there was a big brouhaha about it about how our educational system is in bad shape and we spent a lot of time talking about it and we actually passed a bill that came as a result of that,